**Book**: Current Perspectives in Feminist Media Studies
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***Current Perspectives in Feminist Media Studies*** is a compilation of nineteen thought-provoking articles addressing four important issues outlined by the editors (p.2). The book is divided into six themes – political economy, new media (ICTs, cyber cultures and digital media policies), media identities, sexuality and sexualization, post-feminism, and the need for methodological rigor for feminist research – with each theme dedicated to a cross-section of media and current thinking in feminist research. As the editors have rightly pointed out in their introduction, until recently, feminist scholarship has been dominated by views and thoughts emerging from "mostly white, and the First world" (p. 1).

Salam Al-Mahadin endeavors to re-position Arab feminist studies, arguing that the Western portrayal of women in feminist research is based on a "phallocentric approach of women's perceived lack of a 'phallus'" (p.8). She contrasts this to the Arab world in which woman is a "territory that constructs that symptom called 'man' (Jacques Lacan, 1975/1982)". She tended to explain this by quoting the aversion the West has at the burqa of women by stating that "the discomfort Richard Dawkins experiences in gazing at a burqa (a full-bin-liner thing) clad woman goes beyond the boasted humane feeling of 'oppression' unleashed on woman in Islam". She says that his (Dawkins) male jouissance or pleasure somehow has been denied to him (p.9).She argues that in the Arab world, "the woman is the word and she is self-signifying" as, according to her, it is only due to woman's paramount importance as the ultimate signifier in Arab societies that Western media have hijacked the Arab/Muslim women as an ambassador to the Other (p. 8 and p.9).

Similar arguments echo in the critique offered by Angela McRobbie who highlights the patriarchal tendencies underlying the French government's latest regulations against covering of the face by an African Muslim girl with a headscarf in a school. She argues that the male pleasure in gazing at an uncovered face of a woman manifests from behind the regulation in the name of secularization (p. 94).

Gargi Bhattacharyya moves this argument further by stating that "despite proliferation of media outlets, representations of women in media remained more formulaic, objectifying and, increasingly, hyper-sexualized with no connection to any lived sexuality" (p. 13). She draws distinction between "an analysis of media that can be usefully understood as 'feminist', and an analysis of media studies that is carried out by people who just happened to be feminists" (p. 13). Bhattacharyya insists that feminist research into gender portrayal must move into hitherto unexplored regions including: Imagining Bodies in the World, Economics and Security.

Mary Beltran carefully evaluates gaps in feminist scholarship and, taking her own career experiences as a case study, she underscores the importance of feminist research on "intersections of race and class with gender oppression" (p. 19).

Andrea L Press argues that the gains of feminism during the 1970s have been neutralized by the post-feminists leading to an 'anti-feminism' (p. 100). She calls for more ethnographic studies involving young men and women.

Katharine Sarikakis frames her chapter by explaining feminism as life politics and about changing lives and politics. She argues that feminist media studies, as a dominant paradigm of feminist intervention, pays attention to women's positions *vis a vis* mediated and cultural spaces across the domains of production and consumption, across technologies and geographies, practices and values. This leads to two dimensions of media content – one offering space for representations of women and the other the construction of femininities and the ways in which women make sense of cultural and media texts and create their own meanings (p.110).

Continuing the debate of lacking scholarship in certain parts of the planet, Tanja Bosch in chapter five argues that "little has changed from the times of the publication of first paper on African feminist research by Aida-Opuku-Mensah . . . in the first issue of *Feminist Media Studies*" (p. 24). She focuses on narrating the lack of feminist research on Black Feminist media studies especially involving the lived experiences of African-American women in a context of low economic and social opportunities (p. 25). Her arguments bring to the fore the significance of studies that construct the category of Latina involving Black women of Latin-American origin and the perceived "whiteness" of much feminist studies.

Robin R. Means Coleman also insists on overcoming the "silence" against the "devastating treatment of Black womanhood" (p. 31). She forcefully advocates the line of Norma Manatu's argument—"until Black women . . . are allowed access to and participation in the 'feminine', until they are allowed the choice of accepting or rejecting it, they can hardly join in a fight to escape that which they have not been privy' (p.35). She also decried the gradual vanishing of images of Black woman in media (p. 35) and strongly argues for space in feminist research to explain "what constitutes a Black feminist media studies in the twenty-first century (p.35)?"

Meenakshi Gigi Durham argues that corporeal experiences go beyond "cyberspaces" and the "virtual" (p.52). From a feminist theoretical view Durham argues that the struggle women experience in order to force their bodies into conformity with representations on magazine covers and in advertisements, are often futile and frustrating – corporeal experiences that can shift women's understandings of themselves and media texts. (p.52). Therefore approaches to media studies must include recognitions of corporealities. She contends that corporeal experiences lurk beyond cyberspaces and that they mark gendered subjects. She asks how the media connect with these corporealities, and answers this question by suggesting "dynamic intersections of text and reader via the reassertion of corporeality" might be a "'starting point' for more complex interrogations of media, social cultures and feminism" (p. 52).

Rosalind Gill examines how the term "sexism" is mediated in the present globalized environment. She finds that despite media engagements with ever larger numbers of women, a new form of sexism and discrimination can be seen in their modes of engagement with women. Gill engages the multi-faceted conceptualization of "post-feminism" exclusively (p. 57).

Melisa Gregg explains how new technologies including mobile and the Internet have enabled women to work from home, thus generating flexible employment options. However, she notes that these new technologies have simultaneously increased workplace expectations and pressures (p.70). From a feminist perspective, Gregg argues that these increased opportunities for earning money in both public and private spheres increases the burden of labor beyond regular work hours. Beyond this, women are still expected to fulfill domestic responsibilities.

Micky Lee explores the non-inclusion of ICTs and telecommunication into industries (p.75) and interprets the multiple roles that women play through a Marxist political economy of communication lens. She looks at the problems of production, distribution and consumption and argues that this approach helps in analyzing the digital divide and the unequal distribution of wealth plaguing women in all worlds.

Lisa Yuk Ming Leung highlights gaps in feminist media research through an analysis of Facebook discussions on feminist pages (p 84.). She criticizes how cyberspace (internet) is been utilized by some feminists to meet their own political aspirations. Leung discusses a variety of Facebook trends including groups comprising both male and female activists attacking "feminism" as submissive to patriarchy and perceiving "feminism" as a vehicle for attacking patriarchal power. (pp. 80-81).

Catharine Lumby (p.86) emphasizes the need to go beyond oppositional frames of reference and to enact an ethics of engagement that produces nuanced relationship between speaking positions within the field and their objects in feminist research. Much of the space in these articles has been used to ground the importance of new media and ICTs and their role in negotiating the meaning of body, images and economics of women in the globalized environments.

Leslie Regan Shade takes up the concept of the 'Curious Feminist', coined by Cynthia Enloe, and addresses it from the lens of 'media reform' strategies in the North America. She argues that the 'Curious Feminist' should pay more attention to digital policy issues – local, national and global – while also engaging activists who have been at the forefront of these activities. Such policy analysis should account for the needs of various publics and 'terms of recognition as political subjects, democratic participation in policy processes and equality of social outcomes (p. 115).

Audrey Yue surveys contemporary research in feminist media studies by identifying two important strands from the perspective of cultural studies: Inter-Asia feminist media studies and Queer Asian Diaspora studies (p.119). Taking up Tejaswini Niranjana's interpretation of the culture-nature binary Yue argues that the pairing of woman-as-culture has justified colonization and legitimized modernization. The relationship between culture and modernity, which has its roots in a colonial context, has given the insights as to why women occupy a central place in discussions in the West. Yue argues that it is against this theoretical perspective that inter-Asia feminist media studies has emerged as a rubric of new comparative cultural studies (p.121). According to her, Queer-Asian studies explains the new geopolitics as a response to the global queering thesis which draws on globalization studies to suggest that the emergence of gay, lesbian and transgender identities and cultures outside the confines of the West reflects the impact of

sexual Westernization on the 'Rest' (p. 121). To counter these hegemonic trends, a decentering of metropolitan sexuality and hybridity of queer identities and cultures has become an essential discursive course.

The interviews with Ana Carolina Escosteguy and Anita Gurumurthy have also been emphatic on the unequal representations of women, sexuality and gender in the media and suggest looking for native paradigms of feminist research in the South be it Brazil or India.

Overall, this book offers highly incisive and insightful critiques which expound how the images, bodies and subjectivities of women as portrayed in the media, have become stereotypes both in the mainstream media and to some extent, in current feminist research.

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